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ABSTRACT

"Exploring Careers" is a career education resource program, published in fifteen separate booklets, for junior high school-age students. It provides information about the world of work and offers its readers a way of learning about themselves and relating that information to career choices. The publications aim to build career awareness by means of occupational narratives, evaluative questions, activities, and career games grouped in fourteen occupational clusters. This sixth of the series, "Sales Occupations," presents an overview of jobs in the sales fields, such as sales managers, retail salespersons, and street vendors. Narrative accounts focus on a securities sales worker, an automobile parts counter worker, and a gasoline service station attendant, explaining what they do and how they prepared for their jobs. Exploring sections relate skills needed for these occupations to students' personal characteristics, and learning activities such as asking firms for sales literature and visiting an auto parts store are suggested. A Job Facts section explains nature and places of work, training and qualifications, and other information for thirteen sales occupations. ("Exploring Careers" is also available as a single volume of fifteen chapters.) (KC)

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Exploring Careers

Sales Occupations

U.S. Department of Labor
Ray Marshall, Secretary

Bureau of Labor Statistics
Janet L. Norwood, Commissioner
1979

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Exploring Careers is available either as a single volume of 15 chapters or as separate chapters, as follows:

The World of Work and You
Industrial Production Occupations
Office Occupations
Service Occupations
Education Occupations
Sales Occupations
Construction Occupations
Transportation Occupations
Scientific and Technical Occupations
Mechanics and Repairers
Health Occupations
Social Scientists
Social Service Occupations
Performing Arts, Design, and Communications Occupations
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery Occupations

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Preface

Exploring Careers is a career education resource for youngsters of junior high school age. It provides the kind of information about the world of work that young people need to prepare for a well-informed career choice. At the same time, it offers readers a way of learning more about themselves. The publication aims to build career awareness by means of occupational narratives, evaluative questions, activities, and career games presented in 14 occupational clusters. *Exploring Careers* emphasizes what people do on the job and how they feel about it and stresses the importance of "knowing yourself" when considering a career. It is designed for use in middle school/junior high classrooms, career resource centers, and youth programs run by community, religious, and business organizations.

This is 1 of 15 chapters. A list of all the chapter titles appears inside the front cover.

Exploring Careers was prepared in the Bureau's Division of Occupational Outlook under the supervision of Russell B. Flanders and Neal H. Rosenthal. Max L. Carey provided general direction. Anne Kahl supervised the planning and preparation of the publication. Members of the Division's staff who contributed sections were Lisa S. Dillich, David B. Herst, H. Philip Howard, Chester Curtis Levine, Thomas Nardone, Debra E. Rothstein, and Kathy Wilson. Gloria D. Blue, Brenda Marshall, and Beverly A. Williams assisted.

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Although they are based on interviews with actual workers, the occupational narratives are largely fictitious.

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Exploring Careers

Sales Occupations

This sales worker is pointing out the features of a trail bike to a prospective buyer.

"Hi. I'm Bryce Winters, your man on the street for WKRX. Today I'm interviewing Bill Morgan, a local automobile sales manager. Bill is a success at his job. He likes his work, likes his fellow workers, and earns a substantial income. However, success didn't come overnight or easily. Indeed, Bill has a long and interesting work history and has had all sorts of jobs. There is a common thread, though, that runs through almost all of the jobs Bill has ever held. Almost all involved selling. Let's see if we can get Bill to talk about some of the things he has done and tell us how he feels about his work. Mr. Morgan, tell me about your very first sales job."

Mr. Morgan: That was a long time ago. I started selling newspapers on the street in my home town in Oklahoma when I was 14. The early edition of the Sunday paper came off the press at about 6 p.m. on Saturday. A lot of farmers and oil field workers were in town on Saturday night for shopping and entertainment, and many liked to buy the paper then instead of getting home delivery on Sunday morning. On a good night I could sell 50 papers, which gave me a good supply of pocket money for the following week.

Interviewer: Did you have a particular corner or location where you sold papers?

Mr. Morgan: No, it didn't work like that. The kids who had been with the newspaper company for a long time were given the choice locations. The other kids just had to walk the streets, asking people to buy.

Interviewer: Did that seem unfair to you?

Mr. Morgan: I don't remember; probably not. Those who had been with the newspaper the longest got a better deal. Most businesses do that in one way or another. Anyway, I discovered ways of selling. For example, I would find out what times a movie was going to let out and be waiting in front. Also, I knew the schedule for buses arriving at the local bus station. Some of the drivers would let me board their buses to sell papers. One kid got permission from bartenders to walk through their places a couple of times a night. People in bars tend to be generous tippers.

Interviewer: Was that kid you?

Mr. Morgan: How did you guess?

Interviewer: What was your next sales job?

Mr. Morgan: A newspaper route.

Interviewer: I wouldn't have thought of that as a sales job.

Mr. Morgan: Well, it's true that I spent most of my time delivering the papers house to house and collecting money at the end of the week. But the job also involved sales. I wanted to make more money, which meant persuading more of the people who lived along my route to subscribe to the paper. The same is true for the route drivers who deliver bread, milk, soft drinks, and the like. To be successful, these people must build up their routes.

Interviewer: Were you successful at building up your paper route?

Mr. Morgan: Well, yes, I found new customers. I remember being a little frightened at first at the thought of knocking on doors and asking strangers to take the paper. This was very different from approaching customers on the street. I guess I was afraid that knocking on doors would disturb and annoy people. And I was right. Some got angry and showed it by slamming the door in my face. It didn't take long, however, to realize that those people didn't have anything against me personally. I can't say the same for some of the dogs along the route! Anyway, most people were pretty nice, and I did find a lot of new customers.

Interviewer: What did you do with the money you earned?

Mr. Morgan: I was saving some to buy a car, but I blew most of the money. I spent a lot on fishing gear. That's how I got to know Mr. Andrews, the owner of the local sporting goods store. He needed part-time sales help, so I quit the paper route to work after school and Saturdays in his store.

Interviewer: Did he hire you because of your knowledge of fishing equipment?

Mr. Morgan: Yes, I'm sure that was one of the reasons. Product knowledge was important in that kind of store. Some of Mr. Andrews' customers knew exactly what they wanted, but others needed information before deciding. I was flattered at being recognized as a good source of information on fishing. Being able to help customers with my knowledge made me feel important. I think many people get into sales work through their hobbies. It makes sense to take advantage of your natural interests. My 16-year-old daughter is working this summer in a pet shop. One of her hobbies is raising tropical fish.

Interviewer: And that's how she got the job?

Mr. Morgan: Yes, but it wasn't quite that easy. The pet shop owner wasn't looking for help, as far as we know. Linda just took the initiative, walked into the pet shop, and asked for a job. The owner said he was sorry, but he didn't need more help. Linda was very disappointed because that was her first choice for a summer job. I advised her to go back and tell the man that she would work for a week without pay to prove herself. Linda did, and he must have been impressed because he hired her with pay.

Interviewer: Getting back to your job at the sporting goods store, was there anything you didn't like about it?

"A sales manager is like a coach," says Bill Morgan (center). "I have good players, and it's up to me to get the best out of them."

Mr. Morgan: No, I liked it and I worked there until I left home for college. Well, I'll take that back. I didn't like sweeping the floor. And taking inventory was a nuisance, but we only did that once a year.

Interviewer: Did you plan on a sales career when you entered college?

Mr. Morgan: No, I was going to major in engineering. That's not to say that engineering and sales don't go together. Many industrial products are so complex that it takes people with engineering backgrounds to sell them. But I didn't know that at the time. Looking back, my plan to study engineering wasn't really well thought out. Engineers were in demand at the time, and all the smartest kids were majoring in it. I was just following the crowd.

Interviewer: I would like to ask you more about that later, but let's talk about the jobs you had in college.

Mr. Morgan: At first, I worked at a soda fountain, but that's not really a sales job. True, you take money from people and you give them ice cream and sodas in exchange. You don't need to persuade the customer, though. Just take the order. Anyway, I left the soda fountain after a few months to take a job in a clothing store near the campus. A friend of mine who worked there recommended me to the manager when a job opened up.

Interviewer: Did you have any experience selling clothes?

Mr. Morgan: No, and the manager was a bit hesitant about hiring me for that reason. But I did have the 3 years of retailing experience in the sporting goods store.

Interviewer: How long did it take to learn the job?

Mr. Morgan: After a couple of months I felt pretty confident. The manager was a patient instructor and the other sales people also gave me advice. In selling menswear you try to help the customer select something to make him look good. Of course, the same holds true for women. But anyway, you learn certain rules. A dark suit, for example, is more flattering to a heavy person than a light-colored suit. Fit is also very important. Fitting a customer can be frustrating. Clothing comes in standard sizes; people do not. It's better to lose a sale than try to get the customer to take something that doesn't fit well or can't be satisfactorily altered.

Interviewer: Why is it better to lose the sale?

Mr. Morgan: Because clothing stores, like many other businesses, need steady customers. Sooner or later the customer will discover that the suit, or whatever, fits poorly. Perhaps his wife or girlfriend will let him know. As a result, he probably will take his business elsewhere.

Interviewer: You mentioned suggesting clothes that look best on the customer. How did you handle people who disagreed with your recommendations?

Mr. Morgan: Well, sometimes they were right. And sometimes customers made selections that obviously weren't right for them. You felt like saying, "Gee, the

coat looks terrible on you." Sometimes there was the temptation to ask the customer if he was colorblind. I always tried to be as tactful as possible and steer the customer to something better. But I didn't argue. I'm sure you have heard the old saying, "Win an argument, lose a customer."

Interviewer: Did you work in the clothing store through college?

Mr. Morgan: As long as I stayed in college. I dropped out the second semester of my sophomore year. The math for engineering was not easy, and I just wasn't that interested in working at it. There I was, feeling like a failure at age 20.

Interviewer: What was next?

Mr. Morgan: Well, I stayed on at the men's store for a while, but the manager made it clear that he felt obligated to employ students. I knew some people who had left school to work in an aircraft plant in Texas that paid high wages. So I drove down there and was hired for a job in the incoming inspection department. All of the materials and parts that the aircraft company ordered from other companies came through that department. My job was to inspect these items to make sure the company was getting what had been ordered.

Interviewer: That certainly seems different from sales work.

Mr. Morgan: Yes, it was. I enjoyed the job for a while. It seemed like a very responsible position, and I was learning many new things. However, it did not involve contact with the public, which I missed. In fact, I began to feel isolated.

Interviewer: Was this your first experience with a job that didn't involve contact with the public?

Mr. Morgan: The summer following my first year in college, I got a truckdriving job with a freight company. I delivered incoming freight to stores and factories, and picked up outgoing freight. It didn't last long. I got fired after a couple of weeks. I was driving the truck up a steep hill, and several cartons fell out the back. I didn't realize what had happened, so I kept driving. If I had loaded the truck properly to begin with, it never would have happened.

Interviewer: Still, that seems like a minor thing to be fired for.

Mr. Morgan: My boss had no sense of humor.

Interviewer: What did you do then?

Mr. Morgan: You mean for the rest of the summer?

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Morgan: I went to work in a bakery. That place was hot and the work was physically hard, but I knew it was temporary. You can tolerate a job you dislike if you know it will be over at the end of summer.

Interviewer: Getting back to the aircraft plant, did you look upon that as something to do until you found another sales job?

Mr. Morgan: Well, no, I didn't go into it with that in mind. After being there for several months, though, I realized that I much preferred sales work. It finally dawned on me that I was cut out for sales.

Interviewer: What was your next step?

Mr. Morgan: Selling cars. I had been considering car sales for some time. I was especially interested in sports cars, having recently bought a used British roadster. So I figured out reasons why sports car dealers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area should hire me. First, I had sales experience from the men's store and the sporting goods store. Second, I had a keen interest in sports cars and knew all about them. Third, I believed sports cars were catching on with the public, and this was a good opportunity for me to get in on the ground floor.

Interviewer: Were you successful in selling yourself?

Mr. Morgan: It took a while. The sales managers' reactions were, "Well, that's fine, but we don't need anyone right now." I got the brushoff. You know—"Don't call us, we'll call you." I followed up by writing letters to them, giving them even more reasons why they should hire me. That worked. After just a few days, I had a positive reply. A sales person at one of the dealerships was leaving, and the manager was willing to give me a chance. I was delighted.

Interviewer: Was selling cars like selling clothes?

Mr. Morgan: In many ways. For a lot of people, cars are a form of dress. Clothes make an impression; cars make an impression. People think, "This car says something about what I am." You, for example. I believe you are a very practical-minded person. Do you have a small economy car?

Interviewer: Yes, as a matter of fact I do. But I think that was a lucky guess.

Mr. Morgan: No, I was looking out the window when you drove up.

Interviewer: Can sales people really judge what customers are like?

Mr. Morgan: To a certain extent, yes. People give impressions by the way they dress, talk, and act. A professional sales person is good at observing people. You have to be a good observer in order to "qualify" a prospective customer.

Interviewer: What does "qualifying" customers mean?

Mr. Morgan: Finding out if the person has the ability to buy a car, and if this person really is interested in buying. Many people like to visit a dealer's showroom just to look at the new models. Perhaps they are curious or like to dream about having their favorite car. Some can't afford to buy, and others aren't ready to. Usually, a good sales person can quickly find out by asking

questions. If the person doesn't seem like a buyer, you might say something like, "Look around all you like and then let me know if I may be of help," and then politely excuse yourself. Most people who sell cars are paid a commission on each car they sell. The more you sell, the more you make. Obviously, you can't afford to spend much time with someone who isn't going to buy. Nevertheless, it's important to be polite and leave the nonbuyers with a favorable impression. This person is going to buy someday—hopefully from you.

Interviewer: Suppose the prospective customer does want to buy, but isn't convinced that he or she should get one of your cars?

Mr. Morgan: I would find out what appealed to that individual. What are his or her needs? I would then point out how one of my cars could meet those needs. Actually, a professional will sell the entire car dealership, not just the car.

Interviewer: I don't understand.

Mr. Morgan: I'll give an example. The dealer I was with in Texas had one of the best service departments for imported cars in the entire area. People would drive 50 miles to have their cars serviced there. I always emphasized the excellence of our service department when talking with customers. That helped sell a lot of cars.

Interviewer: I can appreciate what you are saying. I've had problems getting the dealer to fix my car. You mentioned being paid a commission on each one you sold. Did a week ever go by when you didn't sell a car?

Mr. Morgan: The first 2 weeks on that job I didn't sell anything. Luckily, I had saved some money to tide me over. My first sale was to an elderly man who taught history in high school. And I almost blew it because I couldn't see him driving a sports car. So I tried to sell the man a compact sedan. He was a bit shy about admitting what he wanted and I had trouble picking that up. It was like having to read between the lines. That experience taught me not to judge a book by its cover.

Interviewer: Was that first sale a big event for you?

Mr. Morgan: Wow—was it ever. I had never sold anything that expensive in my life. I felt like jumping and shouting with joy. I had begun to have some doubts about my ability and needed that boost to restore some confidence. I still get a good feeling from making a sale. But back then things seemed much more challenging, so each sale was a personal victory. Within a few months, I was averaging about three cars a week and trying hard to become the leading seller in the company. The manager talked the owners into having a contest for us. First prize was a 2-week vacation in Mexico. Second prize was a week's vacation in New Orleans. The owner had two dealerships, so about a dozen sales people were in the contest. Winners would be the two who sold the most

"Whenever you try to persuade a person to do something, you are using sales skills."

cars during a 4-month period.

Interviewer: You won?

Mr. Morgan: I came in a close third. But that was good. With less than a year's experience, I was one of the three top people. And I met my wife Eve during that contest.

Interviewer: You met your wife by selling her a car?

Mr. Morgan: Yes, and it wasn't easy. Eve wanted a particular model that came only with a 4-speed transmission. The problem was she didn't know how to use a stick shift. I was determined to win the contest so I promised to give lessons if she bought. She ordered a car but called the next morning to cancel out because she was having second thoughts about her ability to learn. Back then, she didn't seem to have the self-confidence that she has now. Well, I didn't want to lose the sale so I had to think of an alternative. I suggested we start the lessons with my car that afternoon and assured her that she could still cancel if things didn't work out. That's how our relationship started. We still have a copy of that sales contract. We got married about 2 years later. The wedding was a week after she graduated from college.

Interviewer: What did Eve major in?

Mr. Morgan: Education. She taught in high school for several years and then returned to college full time to get a master's in school administration. She's a high school principal now.

Interviewer: How long did you stay with the car dealer in Texas?

Mr. Morgan: Eve had an offer to teach in California. The West Coast appealed to us, and I figured it would be easy to find a job selling cars out there. One of the advantages of a sales career is the freedom to move about. You can sell anywhere, except maybe in the smallest towns. I went to work for a dealer in the Los Angeles area. The place was practically within walking distance of Eve's school and a short drive to the beach. It was a nice setup.

Interviewer: Why did you leave?

Mr. Morgan: Uncle Sam's orders. I got a letter directing me to report to the Army at Fort Ord, California. After basic training, they transferred me to Fort Myer, Virginia.

Interviewer: And you never returned to live in California?

Mr. Morgan: No, Eve joined me in Virginia and found a teaching job nearby. We got to like this area and saw no reason to leave.

Interviewer: What kind of job did you have in the Army?

Mr. Morgan: Would you believe I drove a truck?

Interviewer: That's a far cry from sales work.

Mr. Morgan: Well, any activity involves selling in some way. Anytime you persuade or induce a person to do something that you want, you are using sales skills. For example, you appealed to my ego in inducing me to do this interview.

Interviewer: While in the Army, did you have part-time sales jobs?

Mr. Morgan: Yes, a few. I worked briefly for a car dealer, but we couldn't agree on a satisfactory part-time schedule, so I gave the job up. I sold appliances in a department store for a while. I also dabbled in life insurance, but with little success.

Interviewer: What was the problem with life insurance?

Mr. Morgan: I just couldn't get interested. I'm not sure why. Perhaps because I had always sold products that people actively shop for—cars, clothes, sports equipment. Things they get enthusiastic about. People generally don't get enthusiastic about life insurance but buy it to protect their families. They must be convinced of the need for this protection. Therefore, selling life insurance successfully seems to require much more perseverance than selling cars successfully. Finding customers is such an important part of the job. Any type of selling requires perseverance, though, and I know several very successful insurance sales people who used to sell cars. I just feel more at ease with customers coming to me.

Interviewer: So you returned to selling cars after getting out of the Army?

Mr. Morgan: Yes, I went with a local import dealer first, and then switched to a larger dealer that handled domestic cars—the organization I'm with now.

Interviewer: Why did you switch dealers?

Mr. Morgan: Better opportunities. This organization had a reputation for being a good place to work. They treated the sales staff right, and the morale showed it. Within a year, I doubled my earnings.

Interviewer: How long have you been the sales manager?

Mr. Morgan: About 4 years. I was an assistant manager for 3 years before being promoted.

Interviewer: Do you ever miss being a sales worker?

Mr. Morgan: I still am—but I know what you mean. At times, I do miss selling. But managing a sales staff is another kind of challenge for me and I thrive on challenges. I'm quite a competitive person. I keep pushing myself to see what else I can handle, how much more I can accomplish. In my job as sales manager, the challenge lies in getting a bunch of aggressive sales workers to pull together as a team. At the risk of sounding corny, I see myself as coaching a sales team. I have good players, and it's up to me to try to get the best out of them. It's especially satisfying to see the young people develop their potential.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. I appreciate your

taking time out for this interview.

Mr. Morgan: It's been my pleasure.

Interviewer: Well, that's it for today, listeners. Tune in tomorrow when I talk with skydiver Laurie Stapleton. This is Bryce Winters, your man on the street, saying goodbye from WKRX.

What Makes a Good Sales Worker?

This section discusses personality traits that contribute to success in sales work. Personality often is the key factor in enjoying sales work and doing well at it, and such traits as self-confidence, enthusiasm, and drive usually are evident in people who make a career of sales.

In his interview by radio station WKRX, Bill Morgan revealed some of the personal characteristics and attitudes common to successful sales workers. See if you can remember things Bill said in the interview that clarify or support the points being made.

Sales workers constantly deal with other people on a one-to-one basis. Insurance agents, for example, are always on the lookout for potential customers, or prospects. They must like people and enjoy striking up conversations with strangers to handle this aspect of the job well. Because contact with other people is so important, an *outgoing personality* is a plus. This is not to say that one must be a "gladhander" or a "backslapper" to be successful. In fact, some people are put off by too much friendliness. Genuine warmth and a pleasant personality, however, often make customers more receptive to a sales worker's ideas.

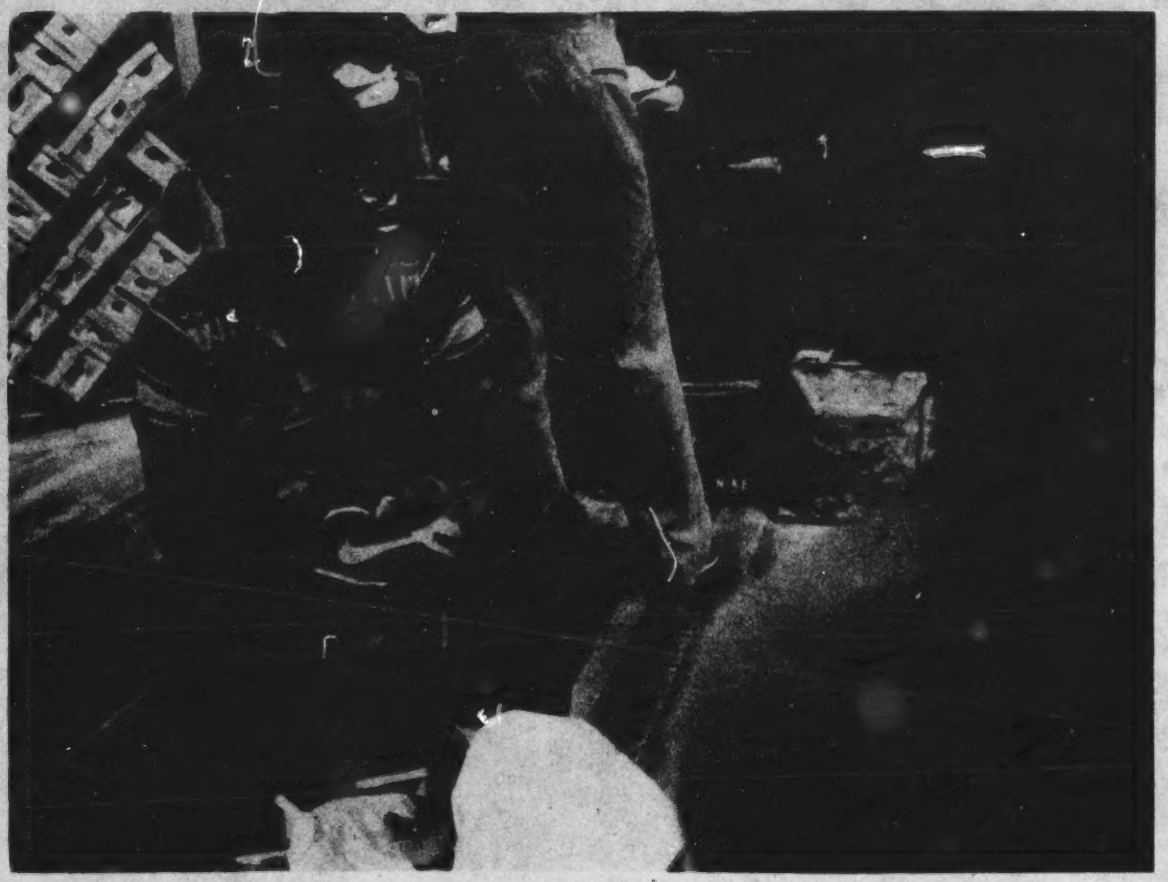
Contacting prospects and keeping in touch with customers are important parts of the job. Real estate agents who handle commercial or industrial property, for example, may take a long time putting together a big deal because of its intricate legal, financial, and political aspects. To keep the prospect of a sale "alive," they must keep in touch with all the parties to the deal—over a period of months or even years—and keep their interest from flagging. In situations such as these, *drive and motivation,* or the ability to be a "self-starter," are absolute "musts."

Enthusiasm and a positive outlook are also valuable traits. A sales worker's enthusiasm can be infectious, and often plays a big part in overcoming a customer's hesitancy to buy. Even enthusiastic sales workers have bad days or experience slow sales periods, however. An upbeat, positive attitude helps sales workers make it through discouraging times.

The sales worker's *product knowledge* has a lot to do with the attention we give to his or her "pitch." Sales workers' familiarity with the products they sell often makes the difference in overcoming our hesitancy to buy. Imagine, for example, that you are in a stereo store, shopping for a new component stereo system. Would you buy from a clerk who didn't know the differences between the various systems available and couldn't suggest even one that would match your particular needs and pocketbook?

An outgoing personality is a "must" for people who sell "big ticket" items.

Because sales work is highly competitive, such traits as *aggressiveness and self-confidence* are important for people in this line of work. A manufacturer's representative trying to convince a customer to buy the company's multimillion-dollar computer system, for example, may have to beat out a number of competitors. He or she must be firm and convincing in the sales presentation to company officials and must not hesitate to call back



A job selling athletes' footwear may require learning about all the major brands of running shoes.

again and again to explain how the system he or she is selling is superior to what competitors have to offer.

Aggressiveness alone won't make many sales, however. Sales workers also need a keen *understanding of people and human nature.* Sensitivity to people's behavior and to the things that motivate them is quite important. Successful sales workers use this sensitivity to judge when a sales approach is "working" and when it should be changed. This quality is especially helpful in dealing with people buying very expensive items that reflect their self-image as well as affect their pocketbook, such as cars or houses. Real estate agents, for example, must be able to select the kind of properties that will appeal to their clients. Otherwise they won't be able to satisfy their customers' needs, and won't make many sales.

Closely related to understanding people is the *ability to inspire trust and confidence.* Imagine, for example, that you are in the market for insurance to protect your home and family. Would you buy from an agent who didn't seem to know the business and whom you weren't sure you could trust?

Persistence is another characteristic of successful sales workers. A securities sales worker, for example, may call a client many times over a period of months without getting a single order to buy or sell stock. The client may be short of cash, have tax problems, or just not think the time is right to make a move. Eventually, however, conditions usually change, and that client may then become a good customer.

Because of the competitive nature of sales work, people in this field must be *able to work under pressure.* The way many sales workers are paid is one of the reasons the

This street vendor has turned her knowledge of plants into a profitable business.

A college degree helped this woman land a job in insurance sales.

field is so competitive. Many firms set quotas, or a minimum number of sales, for their sales workers. Other firms pay neither an hourly wage nor a straight salary to their sales workers; they pay commissions instead. That is, they pay a percentage of the value of the goods that are actually sold. Or, in some cases, many sales workers may be trying to sell the same product, such as a house in the case of real estate agents.

Sales workers often work independently, with little guidance or supervision. This requires the *ability to plan and organize.* Insurance agents, for example, often schedule appointments in the evenings and on weekends, when prospective customers are usually free. It's up to the agent to organize his or her time efficiently—to see clients and take care of paperwork, too.

The ability to plan and organize is nowhere more important than in the sales worker's own financial situation. Sales workers who live on commissions, for example, may have very irregular earnings. A real estate agent may earn $5,000 in 1 week and then nothing at all during the next several months. Sales workers such as these have to be able to withstand slow sales periods. This means saving during times when earnings are high. The following exercise on setting goals illustrates the kind of planning involved.

Setting goals. Commissions are the only source of income for many sales workers. As a result they often must plan carefully and set sales goals for themselves to be financially secure. If you were in the situation below, what sales goal would you set?

1. The company you work for pays you a commission of 5 percent of the total cost of the items you sell. If you sell $1,000 worth of goods, you make $50; if $2,000, you make $100; and so on. The cost of each item you sell is $500.

2. Your fixed monthly living expenses are as follows:

Rent and utilities	$300
Car payment and upkeep	100
Food	150
	$550

Given the above, how many items must you sell each month just to meet your fixed expenses? How many additional items must you sell to pay for the other things you would like to have such as savings, entertainment, eating out, and furniture? Add those two numbers together and you have your monthly sales goal.

Training

Sales work covers a very wide range of occupations—from department store clerk to insurance agent, from people who sell one piece of bubble gum at a time to those who sell $10 million of stock at a time. Training requirements, too, vary a great deal.

In some sales occupations, skills can be obtained relatively quickly right on the job. Gas station attendants, for example, must be able to pump gas, make change, and keep the station clean. These are things they generally learn their first day on the job.

Other sales occupations require advanced degrees in technical fields. Manufacturers' representatives who sell helicopters for aerospace firms, for example, need degrees in aeronautical engineering in order to fully understand the products they sell and to be able to communicate effectively with their customers. In addition to their academic training, sales workers in firms such as these usually receive a thorough orientation in the kinds of aircraft the company makes.

These are the extremes. More information on the training needed for specific sales occupations appears in the Job Facts at the end of this chapter.

Many high schools offer programs in distributive education that provide an excellent background for a wide variety of jobs in sales and merchandising. Students in these programs generally spend half their time in school and the other half working in jobs that provide practical sales experience. They take such courses as an introduction to marketing occupations, general merchandising, fashion merchandising, hotel and motel management, marketing, creative selling, advertising, and food distribution. Practical sales experience comes from working in local businesses, including department stores, grocery stores, and restaurants.

There are college programs that lead to associate, bachelor's, and advanced degrees in such fields as business, marketing, real estate, and insurance. The courses given at community and junior colleges and in 4-year colleges and universities provide a background for selling jobs and also for management jobs in marketing and merchandising.

Business and trade schools offer programs that last from a few months to several years in such fields as marketing, merchandising, and real estate.

In some sales occupations, employers or industry associations offer formal training for beginning and experienced workers alike. Training programs for people who sell securities, insurance, real estate, or automobiles provide a thorough coverage of these fields. Continuing education is important because the regulations affecting sales work in these industries are numerous and complex and because the products or services being offered to the public change, too. Even experienced sales workers must refresh and update their knowledge of the field.

Some sales workers, such as insurance agents and real estate agents, must be licensed by the State in which they work. Others, such as securities sales workers, must be registered with the firm they work for. To qualify for licensing or registration, workers must pass an examination that tests their knowledge of the field they work in. These measures are designed to ensure that sales workers who handle our property or large amounts of our money are properly trained to do so.

Demonstrating a new product is an effective sales technique.

Securities Sales Worker

Janet Woods sells stocks and bonds for a large brokerage firm.

"Why did I stay up for the late movie?" thought Janet Woods as she turned off her alarm clock and rolled sleepily out of bed at 6:30 a.m. "I've got a busy day ahead, and I'm going to have to be as alert as possible. A lot of people will be asking my advice today, and I also have to teach that class at noon."

An hour and three cups of coffee later, she was in her car on the way to another day at the brokerage house where she had been a securities sales worker for the past 4 years. Janet had joined the firm immediately after receiving her master's degree in finance. The first 2 years were hard, as she struggled to get customers in this very competitive field. But by now she was beginning to achieve real success, and thought she had a good chance of being promoted to office manager someday.

When Janet arrived at her office, a copy of *The Wall Street Journal* was already on her desk. Although the stock market doesn't open till 10 a.m., Janet always arrives at work well before the market opens to read various financial publications and keep up with current developments in the world of business. She also finds this a good time to catch up on her paperwork.

As she was finishing the newspaper, a phone call came through from Jack Martin, a student at Middlesex Junior High, where Janet had given a talk the week before. Jack explained that he had saved about $400 from his paper route over the past year and was interested in investing this money in the stock market. He asked Janet if she would recommend a stock.

"That's hard to do, Jack," Janet said, "unless I have some idea of your investment goals. Are you willing to take a chance on a stock with good potential for capital gain? Or are you interested in a stock that is less sensitive to the ups and downs of the market, but that pays a good dividend?"

"I'm not quite sure what you mean by capital gain," Jack responded. "Is that just the profit you make when you sell a stock?"

"Yes, a capital gain is the profit you make when you sell your stock for more than you paid for it," replied Janet. "And a dividend is the money paid to shareholders out of a company's earnings."

Jack seemed puzzled. "Why can't I buy something that both has a good chance of going up and pays a high dividend? Wouldn't I make much more money that way?"

"That's true, Jack, you probably would if we could pick out such a stock. But we would really have to be lucky. You see, stocks are usually thought of as belonging to one of two broad categories: Growth stocks and income-producing stocks. Many growth stocks do pay some dividends, but the companies usually use most of their profits to help the company expand, rather than pay this money out to shareholders in the form of dividends. Then, because the total worth of the company increases, the company's stock also increases in value. Income-producing stocks, such as utility company stocks, on the other hand, generally are better for people who want a good yield on their money but aren't so concerned with quick capital gains."

"I see that picking a stock is more complicated than I thought," said Jack. "I guess I should learn some more about the stock market before I actually invest. How should I start?"

"I think I can help you with that," replied Janet. "My company has prepared a pamphlet that explains the basics of investing. We also put out a monthly list of recommended stocks, both for capital gain and yield. I'll mail these to you today. By the way, I'd like to commend you on the way you are going about investing your money. You certainly seem to have a good head on your shoulders."

"Thanks—and thank you for your time," Jack said. "I'll call back after I've learned some more."

Janet smiled as she put down the phone. She enjoyed helping young people, especially those as ambitious and eager to learn as Jack. He might be a good customer one day....

Janet knows the importance of having steady customers. In her 4 years as a securities sales worker, she has built a following of investors who have confidence in her judgment. They return time and again to buy and sell stock, and each time Janet earns a commission. In

Janet must keep up with what is happening in the business world.

addition, the fact that people trust Janet with large amounts of money makes her feel important.

Around 9:15 Janet received a call from Ellen Swanson, one of her clients. As usual, Ellen got straight to the point.

"Janet, I've just finished that article in this morning's paper on the proposed merger between Carbon Industries and United Copper Company. What is that going to do to the value of my shares in Carbon Industries? Should I sell?"

Janet replied firmly, "I believe the merger will have a favorable effect on your Carbon Industries shares, and I certainly don't think that now is the time to sell." She went on to explain her reasoning, presenting a picture of the industry and its financial workings in a direct, easily understood manner.

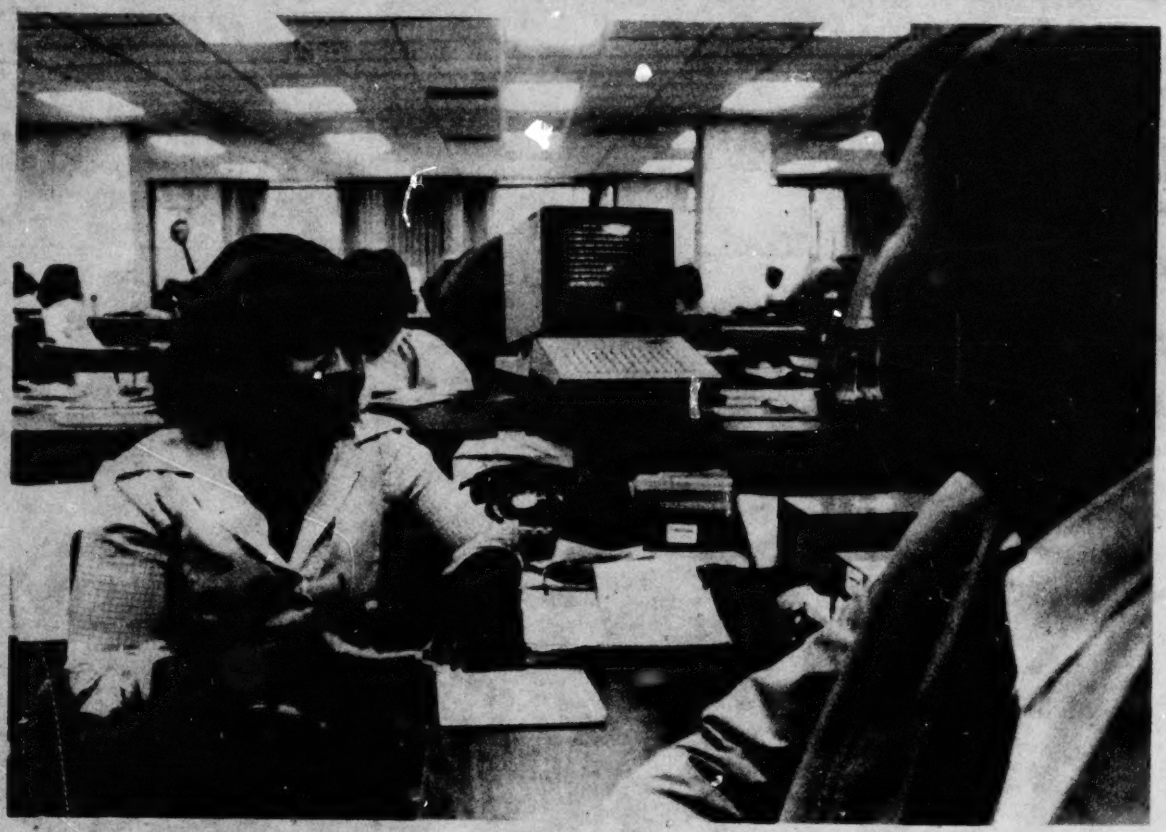
"What you're saying makes sense to me," said Ellen. She asked Janet to contact her if there were any further developments and then said good-bye.

"Well, the telephone calls have begun," thought Janet. "I might as well make that call to Mr. Johnson right now." Mr. Johnson had opened an account just the week before.

"Good morning, Mr. Johnson," said Janet a few moments later. "I think that now would be a good time for you to buy AC&C. The price is a little depressed right now due to the downturn in the market, but the stock has an excellent history of earnings and dividend increases and prospects for the future look good. In addition, at its current price the company has a dividend yielding over 7 percent. I believe this is important to you as I know you are looking for income as well as possible capital gain."

"The stock sounds like a good investment," said Mr. Johnson, "but is there any chance of my losing money?"

Janet replied, "Over the next few weeks the stock may go down a little more, of course, but over the long run



Janet has built up a following of customers who want to invest their money.

Exploring

Securities sales workers must be articulate and persuasive. Persuading people to buy or sell securities is one of the most important parts of the job.

- Are you a good listener?
- Do you remember what people tell you about themselves?
- Can you tell how people feel about things by talking to them?
- Do you like to campaign for a school office?
- Are you often chosen for group activities?
- Do you like to debate?
- Do you like to speak in front of your class?

Because they often work for commissions, securities sales workers must have initiative and be self-starters.

- Do you get up in the morning by yourself?
- Do you do your homework and household chores without being prodded by your parents?
- Do you stick with projects until they are finished?

Securities sales workers must perform well in a highly competitive situation.

- Do you like being best at the things you do?
- Do you like entering contests and playing competitive games?
- Do you want to be at the top of your class?

Securities sales workers must be optimistic in order to face slow sales periods and downturns in the stock market.

- Are you persistent?
- Do you always assume things will get better?
- When your team loses, do you still look forward to the next game?
- Are you good at cheering up your friends when they are depressed?
- Does failure make you want to try harder?

Unlike many other jobs, success in sales work can be measured directly by the amount of money one makes.

- Is making money important to you?
- Do you like having your performance measured?
- Do you like to be recognized when you do something well?

Suggested Activities

Look in the financial section of your newspaper. Do the news stories in this section interest you? Can you understand the stock tables on the previous day's activities on the various exchanges?

Are there any large companies based in your home town? If so, try to find them in the stock tables.

Visit a brokerage office in your community. While you are there, observe the surroundings. What are the brokers doing? Are they on the phone a lot? How do they dress?

Go to your school or public library and look for books or pamphlets on investing in securities.

An investor is trying to decide between putting her money in a savings account yielding 5.5 percent per year or investing in a dividend-paying stock. Which of the following stocks would provide a higher yield on her money than the savings account? (Forget about the possibility of capital gains or losses.)

Stock	*Price (dollars)*	*Dividend (dollars per year)*
AC&C	60⅞	4.60
International Computers	263	11.52
American Widget Co.	57	1.90
Fast Food Enterprises	53¾	.36
American Railroad Co.	30½	2.32
Mouse Traps Inc.	40¾	.32
D.C. Electric Co.	14⅝	1.34

See answer at end of chapter.

The price-earnings (P-E) ratio for a stock is determined by dividing a stock's price by the amount of money each share earned over the past year. For example, a stock selling at $25 that earned $5 would have a P-E of 5. Look up the P-E ratios for five different stocks in your newspaper's financial section. Do all stocks have the same P-E ratios? What could be some of the reasons for the differences?

Pretend that you have just been given $1,000 to invest. Select a stock or stocks that you like and determine how many shares you can buy. Chart the value of your stocks over a period of time. How did you choose your stocks? How much money did you make or lose?

The Dow Jones Industrial average is one measure of stock market performance. Go to your library and see if you can find a chart showing the Dow's performance over the past 25 years. Can you identify any periods that would have been good times to buy stocks? Looking at past and present trends, do you think now is a good time to buy or to sell? Why?

Join a Business Explorer Post if there is one in your area. Exploring is open to young men and women aged 14 through 20. To find out about Explorer posts in your area, call "Boy Scouts of America" listed in your phone book, and ask for the "Exploring Division."

If you are a Boy Scout, try for the American Business and Salesmanship merit badges.

If you are a Girl Scout, see if your local troop has the From Dreams to Reality program of career exploration. Troops may also offer opportunities to try out careers through internships, service aide and community action projects, and proficiency badges.

Contact the personnel departments of securities firms in your community and ask for career information. Many firms have pamphlets and brochures that describe jobs in the securities industry.

For more information on the work of securities sales workers, write to the Securities Industry Association, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005. There is a $1.00 charge for this material.

Related Occupations

Securities sales workers are not the only people who sell relatively expensive items. See if you can unscramble the following job titles to find four other sales workers whose jobs are similar to the securities sales worker.

1. SUREINCAN GENTA NAD BORRKE
2. LARE TASTEE TANGE NAD ORBKER
3. BILEOOMAUT LASSE ROWREK
4. CHATY REKORB

If you are interested in the securities industry, you might investigate the following nonselling occupations after you unscramble them.

5. TIRUCESY STYLANA
6. RODER KLERC
7. GINMAR RADERT
8. DONB DARTER

See answers at end of chapter.

Auto Parts Counter Worker

Norman Edwards is an expert on auto parts. His store stocks over 20,000 different items.

Norman Edwards stood behind the counter of Southeast Auto Parts Store. In front of him, he could look out the window past the battery and tool displays at the people and cars passing on the busy street. Behind him, there were about 20 metal shelves, each 7 feet high and about 30 feet long. These shelves contained over 20,000 automobile parts. Norman had memorized the number, use, and price of hundreds of these parts.

It was only 8:30 a.m. and the telephone was ringing again for at least the tenth time since the store had opened at 8:00. "Southeast Auto Parts, may I help you?" said Norman calmly as he pulled a note pad closer to the phone.

"I hope so," answered the caller. "This is Jerry over at Collin's Exxon. Do you have any brake shoes for a 1971 Plymouth Scamp?"

"Just a second, Jerry, let me check," said Norman as he quickly thumbed through his parts catalog to find the proper number for the part. The parts catalog was actually a loosely bound collection of various manufacturers' catalogs. The catalog rested on top of the counter and extended over 4 feet along the counter. Norman quickly found the desired part and checked the number, ST5329. Once he had found the part's number, he knew from memory that he had the part in stock and that the price was $12.25. If he hadn't known the price, though, he could have checked the current price list that accompanies each manufacturer's catalog.

"We have the part in stock, Jerry. I'll have Susan deliver it in just a few minutes. Do you need anything else?"

"Not right now, thanks," said Jerry.

Norman then turned to the young woman who was stocking shelves behind the counter and said, "Susan, would you get some brake shoes, number ST5329, and deliver them to Collin's Exxon?"

"Sure," said Susan. "Anything else you want while I'm out?" Susan is a driver. It is her job to deliver parts to customers, pick up parts at the warehouse, and help stock parts on the shelves. Sometimes she helps wait on customers when Norman is very busy. Norman himself started out as a driver and in fact learned the trade that way. When he became familiar enough with the business he was promoted to parts counter worker.

Norman then handed Susan a list of numbers of parts that were not in stock but that customers had ordered that morning.

"While you're out, pick these up at the warehouse. I promised we would have them by noon," he said.

Just after Susan left, three customers walked into the

"If you treat people right, they come back again and again. I know a lot of them by name."

store at the same time. "That's how this business is," thought Norman, "it comes in spurts." Norman then waited on the customers at a steady pace. The first wanted a bypass hose for a 1972 Chevrolet Camaro which Norman quickly found was part number CH476. He then got the part off the shelf, wrote out a receipt, and took payment.

Norman's next customer had a problem. His 1974 Chevrolet Vega was burning too much oil and he wanted to know if Norman had any ideas for improving this situation.

"What kind of oil are you using in your car now?" Norman asked.

"I believe it's 10–W–30, but I'm not absolutely sure," the customer responded.

"That could be the problem, then," Norman said. "10–W–30 is a fairly thin oil. Why don't you try this 10–W–50? It just might solve your problem. It is much thicker and as a result is not so likely to burn."

The customer said that sounded reasonable and bought 5 quarts of 10–W–50, enough to change the oil in his car.

Norman's next customer was not so easy to please. He wanted a part that independent parts stores, such as the one Norman works in, do not stock. Automobile dealers do, however. Norman politely explained this to the customer and said he was sorry he couldn't be of help this time but to check with him if the customer needed any other parts in the future. He then referred the customer to a local Ford dealer who Norman knew would have the part.

During the time Norman was waiting on the walk-in customers he was also helping customers over the phone. As he spoke, he took orders on a note pad which he always kept beside him.

About 10:30, Jane Bregan walked into the store, greeted Norman, and went to the shelves behind the counter. Jane was a manufacturer's representative and was in the store to be sure that there was an adequate stock of all her company's parts. She would be in the store for another couple of hours, taking inventory on her line of parts and ordering those the store needed.

While Jane was in the back of the store, Norman continued waiting on customers. He knew many of the customers by name and, when business slowed, he would sometimes stop and talk for awhile with them. But lulls didn't occur very often, and never lasted long.

A little after noon, Susan returned, bringing sandwiches from a local carryout for them both. Norman always ate in the store, grabbing a bite when he could. Norman was just about to eat his sandwich when a customer walked into the store.

"May I help you?" Norman asked.

"Yes, I need a new clutch plate for my car. Do you have any in stock?"

"We sure do," said Norman. "What kind of car do you have?"

"It's a 1970 Chevrolet Impala."

"What size engine?" asked Norman.

"I don't know," said the customer.

"Sorry," said Norman, "but I can't get the part unless I know what size engine your car has. General Motors made both 10-inch and 11-inch clutch plates for 1970 Impalas, depending on the number of cubic inches in the engine. I could sell you a clutch plate right now, but there is no way of being sure it would fit without knowing the size of your car's engine."

"Well, I can take both clutch plates and return the one that doesn't fit," replied the customer.

"Sure," said Norman, "but I'll have to charge you now for both of them and give you a refund when you return the one that doesn't work."

"It sounds like you don't trust me," said the customer angrily. "I'll just take my business elsewhere," he added, slamming the door as he stomped out of the store.

Norman was sorry to lose the sale but relieved that the customer had left. When he had first started in the business, Norman had gotten an ulcer from dealing with customers like this one. But by now he was more philosophical. He regarded unreasonable customers as an unavoidable part of dealing with the public. Norman was always polite and tried to help, but it no longer bothered him if a difficult customer went away angry. In fact, thinking of the customer's next encounter with a parts counter worker brought a smile to Norman's face.

Exploring

Parts counter workers deal with the public.

- Do you enjoy talking with people?
- Is it easy for you to talk with people you don't know?
- Do you like giving directions to strangers?
- Can you keep your temper even when people are rude to you?
- Are you good at remembering people's names?

Parts stores, like any other business, require a great deal of organization and recordkeeping in order to run smoothly.

- Do you make lists of things to do?
- Do you finish your homework on time?

- Do you like to keep your room neat and orderly?
- Can you find your possessions quickly?

Parts counter workers often work under pressure. They have to work quickly and accurately. They need good memories to keep track of thousands of parts.

- Can you do good work even when you are rushed?
- Do you like playing chess or checkers against a time clock?
- Are you good at remembering your friends' phone numbers, addresses, and birthdays?

Parts counter workers must have a good knowledge of cars and how they work.

- Do you like to read car magazines?
- Are you interested in how things work?
- Do you know what a carburetor is and what it does? A clutch? A shock absorber? How many other auto parts can you name?
- Do you repair your bicycle when it breaks down?
- Do you take things such as old clocks and toasters apart to see how they work? Can you put them back together?

Suggested Activities

Arrange a visit to an auto parts store. Ask the counter worker to show you how to find a specific part in the parts catalog. Then see if you can find the price for the part in the price list. See if the counter worker has any extra or out-of-date catalogs and price lists that you can take home.

If you own a bicycle, see how many parts you can identify. You should be able to identify at least 50 parts. Can you imagine how complicated an auto parts counter worker's job is with the thousands of different parts in each car and the hundreds of different types of cars?

Join an Auto Mechanic Explorer Post if there is one in your area. Exploring is open to young men and women aged 14 through 20. To find out about Explorer posts in your area, call "Boy Scouts of America" listed in your phone book, and ask for the "Exploring Division."

If you are a Boy Scout, try for a merit badge in Salesmanship.

Join a chapter of VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America) if your school has one. VICA chapters

To serve customers faster, Norman has memorized the location of most parts in the store. "Our customers don't want to waste a lot of time waiting for me to find something."

plan projects, take field trips, and hold competitions in such skill areas as auto mechanics.

Join a chapter of DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) if your school has one. DECA clubs aid in the development of good sales habits and techniques, and help students get part-time sales jobs while they are still in school.

Spend time on hobbies and other activities in which you build or repair things. You might, for example, volunteer to repair appliances for a good cause or make repairs around your home.

Participate in an activity that involves handling money and making change. Selling tickets, working in a concession stand during athletic events, selling Girl Scout cookies, or having a newspaper route would all provide good experience.

Write for information on a career as a parts counter worker to Automobile Service Industries Association, 444 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611 and to Automotive Service Councils, Inc., 188 Industrial Drive, Suite 112, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126.

Related Occupations

Parts counter workers are just one link in a chain of automobile-related sales occupations. The work of five other people is described below. If you need to, refer to the list of job titles at the end.

1. I work for a company that makes automobile parts and accessories. I visit auto parts stores and sell them the parts my company makes. Who am I?

2. I work for new and used car dealers. My earnings aren't always as steady as a parts counter worker's, but once I made over $1,000 in 1 week selling new cars. Who am I?

3. I work for a large automobile dealership. When customers have problems with their cars, I am usually the first person they see. I determine what is wrong with the car, write a repair order, and then get a mechanic to do the actual repair. Who am I?

4. I'm not actually a sales worker, but I need to know as much about cars and how they work as a parts counter worker does. In fact, cars wouldn't last long if it weren't for me, because I am the person who fixes them when they aren't running well. Who am I?

5. I also keep cars on the road and trouble free. I put fuel into them and check items such as oil level, tire pressure, and transmission fluid level. I also do minor repairs such as fixing flats. Who am I?

Automobile mechanic
Automobile sales worker
Automobile service adviser
Gasoline service station attendant
Manufacturer's representative

See answers at end of chapter.

Gas Station Attendant

Al Dietrich likes the variety in his job.

Al Dietrich had worked the 3–to–11 shift 6 days a week at Simm's Service Station since he had entered the University of Oregon 2 years ago. He was studying to be an accountant and needed a job to help pay his school expenses. Al had jumped at the chance when he heard about the opening at the gas station. He had worked around cars even before he could drive. The hours of his shift were just right since all his classes were in the morning.

Al arrived at Simm's just before 3 p.m. As he entered the office area, he ran into Brian, whose shift was just ending.

"How's it going, Brian? Been busy today?"

"No, I guess the rain is keeping people home," Brian replied. "In fact, I even had time to clean the service bays. I thought you might want to do some studying tonight."

Cleaning the bays was one of Al's jobs and he appreciated Brian's taking on the job himself.

"Thanks a lot. I don't suppose you had time to clean the restrooms, too?" Al said with a grin. That was another of Al's jobs, since he was on the late shift which generally was less busy.

"No, I didn't, but they shouldn't be too bad. See you tomorrow."

Soon after Brian left, Al's first customer of the day pulled into the station in a red Ford pickup. "Fill it up with regular, please," said the customer when Al walked over to the driver's window.

Al turned on the pump, inserted the nozzle, and set the handle at a moderate flow of gas. He walked over to the driver again and asked, "Shall I check under the hood?"

"Thanks, I checked it before I left home, but would you check the tires? I think the left rear one may be a bit low."

"Sure thing," said Al as he began checking the tire pressure with his gauge.

"The front two look okay, 28 pounds each," he said as he walked to the rear of the car. When he checked the left rear tire, though, the gauge read only 24 pounds. Al used the air hose to bring it up to the proper pressure.

Just as he finished recoiling the air hose, the gas pump clicked off. Al finished filling the truck's tank without spilling a drop.

"That will be $8.50," he said. He made change for the $10 bill he was handed and said, "Thanks."

By 6 p.m., in the 3 hours since Al's shift had started, it had gotten very dark. It was quiet; only about a dozen customers had pulled into the station in all that time. Deciding that this would be a good time to clean the restrooms, Al got the cleaning materials out of the storeroom and tackled the job. He had almost finished one of the restrooms when the bell rang to indicate that a customer was out front.

It was a man in a white Pacer with out-of-State plates.

"May I help you?" Al asked.

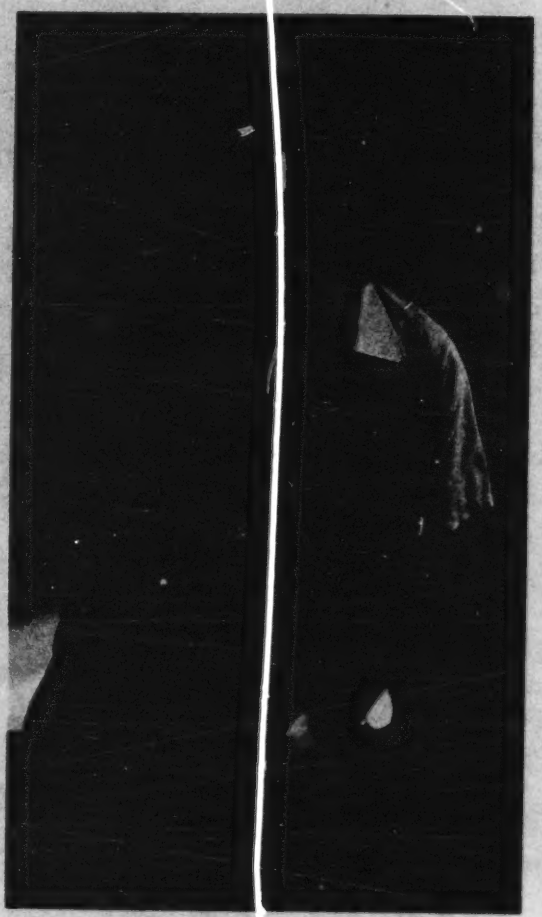
"Yes," the man replied, "can you tell me how to get to the main highway?"

Al gave him the directions and then asked if he needed any gas.

"No, thanks," said the man as the white Pacer pulled away.

Al headed back toward the restrooms. "If I finish quickly, maybe I can get a little studying done tonight," he thought.

But it was not to be.



"I was tinkering with cars even before I could drive, so in a way this job was made for me."

Just as Al finished mopping the second restroom, the station's bell rang again. The Dodge did not stop at the pumps, but instead parked in front of one of the service bays.

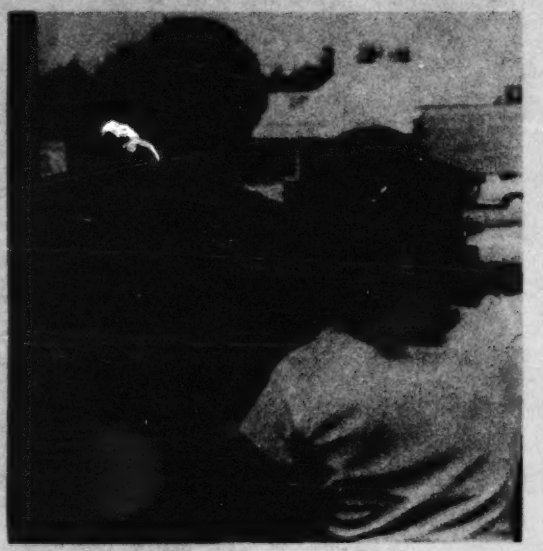
"Can I help you?" Al asked the driver who had gotten out of her car and was walking towards him.

"I hope so," the customer replied. "I've got a flat tire that needs fixing and I have to drive another 100 miles tonight. And I don't think the spare I have on would make it."

Al glanced at the car's left back tire and noticed that it was worn slick. "I wouldn't trust that spare either," said Al. "Let's take a look at the flat."

The customer opened the trunk of the Dodge and Al took the flat tire into the service bay. He filled it with air and slowly let the water trickle over the tire until he came to a spot where he could see bubbles coming off the tire. "Here's the leak," said Al, as he marked the spot with a piece of chalk. Then he took the tire over to a machine that would help him strip the tire from its rim so it could be patched. After patching the tire, Al used the same machine to put the tire back on the rim. He filled it with air and again checked the tire with a trickle of water to be sure it wasn't leaking air.

"I had better put this tire back on your car now," said Al. He was worried about the customer driving on the worn spare. "Do you want to buy a new tire now to replace that spare?"



Al likes dealing with people. "They make life more interesting."

"Perhaps I should," she replied. "How much would that cost?"

"$32.50 plus tax," said Al.

"Okay, I'll take one," said the customer.

Al put the customer's car on the lift in the service bay. Then he removed the worn spare from the car and replaced it with the tire he had repaired. He took a new tire of the same size down from the rack and put it on the rim of the worn spare. This required repeating much the same procedure as he had used to fix the flat. Finally, he put the new tire in the customer's trunk.

"That should just about do it," said Al.

"Great," said the customer. "How much do I owe you?"

Al wrote up the bill which included $3 for fixing the flat, $2 for changing the tires around, $32.50 for the new tire, and $4.25 tax. "The bill comes to $41.75," said Al. "Will that be cash or charge?"

"Cash," she replied, as she gave Al two twenties and a five.

Al gave the customer her change, thanked her, and wished her a good trip. Even though he had missed studying, Al was glad to have helped the woman because he would receive a commission on the sale of the tire. In addition, he got a sense of satisfaction from making the woman's trip safer on this cold, rainy night.

Just as the Dodge was pulling out of the station, a late model Cadillac drove up to the pumps. As Al approached, the driver lowered her window and said, "Would you fill it up with premium, please?"

"Sure thing," said Al. "Shall I also check under your hood?"

"The car seems to be running well, thank you. But maybe you could check just to be sure."

Al opened the hood and proceeded to check the water levels in the radiator and battery, the transmission fluid level, and the oil level on the dipstick. He saw that there was plenty of oil in the car, but it seemed very dark in color. He rubbed his fingers around the oil on the dipstick and noticed that it felt gritty.

"It looks like you need to have the oil changed," Al said. "It really seems dirty and that could harm your engine."

"Are you sure you're not just trying to sell me some oil, young man? After all, I've had this car less than a year."

"Oh no, ma'am, the oil is dirty," Al assured her. "How many miles do you have on the car?"

"Well, it had about 25,000 miles when I bought it, and I've put on another 10,000 miles," the woman replied. "Are you sure the oil is dirty?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Al. "And it should be dirty after

10,000 miles. You should have it changed every 6,000 miles or so."

The woman looked skeptical, so Al just closed the hood and finished filling the car with gas. Before she left, however, she told Al that she was taking the car to a dealer next week to get the air-conditioning fixed and would see what they had to say about the oil change.

As the woman drove away, Al smiled to himself because he was pretty sure that once the mechanics at the dealership explained about changing the oil, the woman would remember him and trust him in the future. In fact, she might well become a steady customer at Simm's.

By this time, Al's shift was almost over and he soon saw his replacement, Chet, pull into the station. He spoke to Chet for a few minutes and then went home to study for his cost accounting class which would begin at a very early 9:10 the next morning.

Exploring

Gasoline service station attendants constantly deal with the public.

- Do you like helping people?
- Do you enjoy speaking with strangers?
- Can you give directions to someone who is lost?
- Can you keep your temper even when people are rude to you?

Attendants must make change and fill out credit card slips rapidly and accurately.

- Are you careful when you do your homework or take a test?
- Are you good at adding and subtracting in your head?
- Is your handwriting easy for other people to read?
- Can you do good work even when you are rushed?
- Do you count your change?

Gasoline service station attendants work outdoors and often get greasy and dirty.

- Do you like outdoor sports and recreational activities?
- Do you prefer outdoor chores such as mowing the lawn to indoor ones?
- Are you willing to get your hands dirty?
- Even though you get dirty, can you keep your work area neat and clean?
- Do you like to put gas in the family car at a self-service gas station?

Gas station attendants make minor automobile repairs.

- Are you handy with tools?
- Do you work on your own bicycle?
- Are you interested in automobiles and how they work?
- Before you start working on something, do you think about how you will go about it?

Suggested Activities

The next time you are in a service station, watch the attendant as he or she services your family car. Ask the attendant to show you how to check the air pressure in the tires. What happens if the tire pressures are not even?

Read the owner's manual for your family car (it's probably in the glove compartment). The manual can show a lot about how a car works. Can you understand the manual? Does it interest you?

Take part in school, religious, or community activities that involve meeting the public, handling money and making change, and writing out receipts.

Ask your parents if you can check the motor oil level in the family car. What happens if the car is driven without enough oil in the motor?

Join a chapter of VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America) if your school has one. VICA chapters plan projects, take field trips, and hold competitions in such skill areas as automobile mechanics.

Join a chapter of DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) if your school has one. DECA clubs aid in the development of good sales habits and techniques, and assist students in obtaining part-time sales jobs while they are still in school.

If you are a Boy Scout, try for merit badges in Salesmanship and Traffic Safety.

Join an Auto Mechanic Explorer Post if there is one in your area. Exploring is open to young men and women aged 14 through 20. To find out about Explorer posts in your area, call "Boy Scouts of America" listed in your phone book, and ask for the "Exploring Division."

Write to a major oil company and ask for information on becoming a gasoline service station attendant or manager.

Related Occupations

Gasoline service station work offers good opportunities for people who want to work part time—high school and college students who are unable to hold a full-time job, for example. Fourteen other occupations in which large numbers of students work part time are described below. Try to match the workers with their job titles.

1. Diane sells clothes in the men's department of a large department store.

2. Larry clears the tables of dirty dishes in a downtown restaurant.

3. Jack washes the dishes after Larry brings them to the restaurant kitchen.

4. Sue helps a veterinarian feed and care for animals who must stay overnight at the veterinarian's office.

5. Ann shows moviegoers the way to their seats in a large theater.

6. Bill makes ice cream sodas in the dining area of a large drug store.

7. George returns books to their shelves in a public library.

8. Sarah washes buses for a city bus company.

9. Janet works as a student nurse when not attending classes at nursing school.

10. Greg sells newspapers and magazines at a stand on Main Street.

11. Susan works behind the cash register in a large discount store.

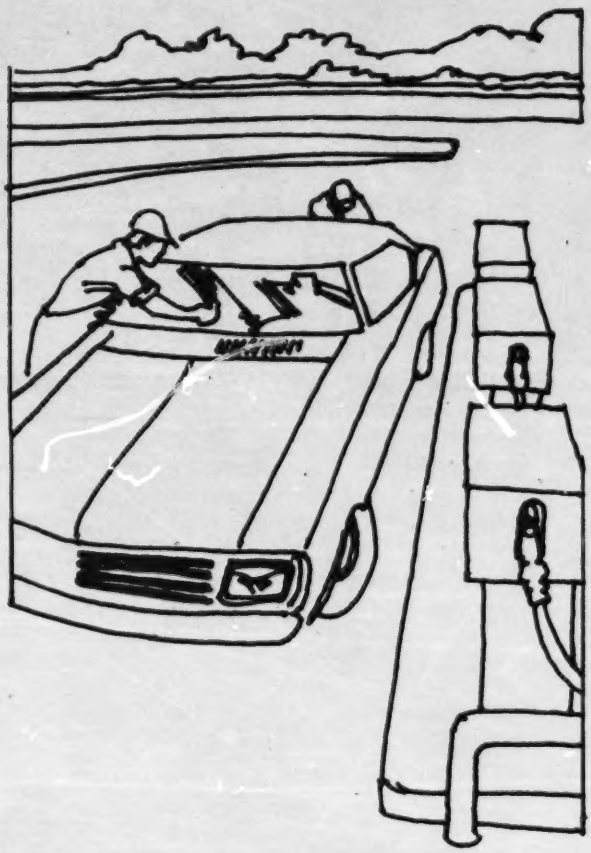
12. Dick operates the Ferris Wheel for a small carnival.

13. Judy delivers messages and carries articles from office to office in a high-rise building.

14. Mary helps stock the shelves in a supermarket.

Newspaper vendor
Retail trade sales clerk
Cashier
Library clerk
Messenger
Animal caretaker
Stock handler
Vehicle washer
Dining room attendant
Dishwasher
Fountain worker
Health trainee
Amusement attendant
Usher

See answers at end of chapter.



Job Facts

There isn't room in this book for a story about every sales occupation. However, you'll find some important facts about 13 of these occupations in the following section. If you want additional information about any of them, you might begin by consulting the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, a publication of the Department of Labor which should be available in your school or public library.

Occupation	*Nature and Places of Work*	*Training and Qualifications*	*Other Information*
Automobile Parts Counter Workers	These workers sell replacement parts and accessories for cars, vans, trucks, and other motor vehicles. They also keep parts catalogs and price lists up to date, unpack incoming shipments, and take care of the paperwork. Most work for automobile dealers and parts wholesalers. Others work for truck dealers, retail automobile parts stores, and warehouse distributors of automotive parts. Trucking companies and bus lines employ counter workers to dispense parts to their mechanics.	Counter workers must know the different types and functions of motor vehicle parts and be able to work with numbers. Because they must identify and locate parts quickly, a good memory and the ability to concentrate on details are desirable. Most learn the trade on the job. Beginners usually start as parts deliverers or trainees. Generally it takes about 2 years to become fully qualified. Employers generally look for high school graduates. Courses in automobile mechanics, math, merchandising, and bookkeeping are helpful.	The work is not physically strenuous, but counter workers spend much time on their feet. At busy times, they may be under some pressure waiting on customers and answering the phone at the same time. Many counter workers have to work on Saturdays as well as weekdays. Some counter workers are members of unions.

Occupation	*Nature and Places of Work*	*Training and Qualifications*	*Other Information*
Automobile Sales Workers	These workers sell new and used automobiles and trucks. They contact prospects, appraise the trade-in value of the old vehicles, and arrange for financing, servicing, and delivery of the new one. New car dealers employ most automobile sales workers. The rest work for used car dealers.	Most beginners are trained on the job. Many dealers also provide several days of classroom training on the basics of the job. Automobile manufacturers also offer some training programs and may furnish manuals and other materials. A high school diploma usually is required, and some college may be preferred. Previous sales or public contact experience is helpful. High school courses in public speaking, business arithmetic, merchandising, and business law provide a good background. Sales ability, initiative, and self-confidence are essential. The ability to express oneself well is also important.	Sales workers frequently work evenings and Saturdays because customers find shopping after work convenient. Some also work Sundays and take a day off later in the week. Both employment and earnings of automobile sales workers vary from year to year because new car sales are sensitive to changing business conditions.
Automobile Service Advisers	These workers are the link between customers and mechanics in many large repair shops. When customers bring their cars into the service department, service advisers find out what has to be done and arrange for mechanics to do the work. Most work for large automobile dealers that employ from 1 to 4 advisers. Some work for large independent automobile repair shops.	Service advisers are trained on the job and many work their way into adviser positions after starting as auto mechanics or helping the service department dispatcher. Beginners usually can become qualified in 1 to 2 years, but learning to estimate body repairs may take longer. Employers prefer high school graduates over 21 with experience in auto repair. Courses in auto mechanics, commercial arithmetic, sales, public speaking, and English are helpful. Tact is an important quality for service advisers because they sometimes must deal with unhappy customers.	Service advisers are busiest early in the morning when customers bring their cars and late in the afternoon when they return. Many service advisers are members of unions.
Gasoline Service Station Attendants	These workers sell gas and accessories to motorists. They may also check tire pressure, wash automobile windows, and check crankcase oil level. Service station attendants work in gasoline service stations throughout the country.	Applicants should have a driver's license, an understanding of how automobiles work, and some sales ability. They should know simple arithmetic to make change quickly and help keep business records. They receive most of their training on the job. It can take up to a year to become fully qualified. Many high schools offer formal training programs for students in their last 2 years of high school.	Many service stations stay open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As a result, work may include evenings, weekends, and holidays. There are numerous opportunities for part-time work, which makes the occupation attractive for students working their way through school and other workers who want to add to their incomes.

Sales Occupations

Occupation	*Nature and Places of Work*	*Training and Qualifications*	*Other Information*
Insurance Agents and Brokers	These workers sell policies that protect individuals and businesses against future losses and financial pressures. They also help policyholders obtain settlements of insurance claims. About half of the agents and brokers specialize in life insurance while the rest sell liability insurance. A growing number sell both types of insurance.	Most employers prefer college graduates. Courses in sales, accounting, economics, finance, business law, and insurance are helpful. Appropriate personal qualities such as aggressiveness and self-confidence are important. Newly hired workers usually receive training at the agencies where they will work and frequently also at the insurance company's home office. All agents and most brokers must be licensed in the State where they work. Most must pass an examination.	Due to the competitive nature of this field, many workers transfer to other occupations when they are unable to get enough clients to earn a good living. As a result, there are usually numerous openings for individuals with the appropriate personal characteristics.
Manufacturers' Sales Workers	These workers represent companies that manufacture products ranging from computers to can openers. They sell these products mainly to other businesses and to institutions, such as hospitals and schools. Most work out of branch offices, usually in big cities near potential customers. Almost all industries employ manufacturers' sales workers; companies that produce food products employ the most.	Employers generally prefer college graduates. The recommended course of study depends on the product sold. For example, those who work for drug manufacturers usually have studied pharmacy in college. A pleasant personality and appearance and the ability to meet and get along well with people are important. Newly hired workers generally receive formal training from the company before starting the job.	Some manufacturers' sales workers have large territories and do considerable traveling, sometimes on nights and weekends. When on business trips, sales workers are reimbursed for expenses such as transportation and hotels.
Models	Most of these workers model the latest fashion designs and cosmetics. Others pose for a wide variety of products, including cars, soft drinks, and perfume. Clothing manufacturers, designers, and wholesalers employ the largest number of models. Modeling jobs are available in most urban areas, but most are in New York City because it is the center of the fashion industry.	There are no educational requirements for models. Courses in drama, art, and fashion design may be helpful. A model's most important asset is a distinctive and attractive physical appearance. Some models attend modeling schools and a few promising beginners receive training from agencies. Female models must be at least 5 feet 7 inches tall and weigh no more than 120 pounds. Male models must be 6 feet tall and wear a size 40 suit. Most agencies require that models obtain a portfolio of photographs of themselves.	Models sometimes must work under uncomfortable conditions—posing in a swimsuit in midwinter, for example. Competition for modeling jobs is very keen.

Occupation	*Nature and Places of Work*	*Training and Qualifications*	*Other Information*
Real Estate Agents and Brokers	Real estate agents and brokers represent property owners in selling or renting their property. Most work for small real estate firms, but a few work for builders to sell homes in a particular development. Real estate is sold in all areas, but employment is concentrated in urban areas and smaller, but rapidly growing, communities.	High school graduation is generally the minimum requirement. Many employers prefer college graduates. Courses in math, business law, real estate, and finance are helpful. Many colleges and universities offer degrees in real estate. Personality traits are fully as important as academic background. Real estate firms look for applicants who have a pleasant personality and neat appearance. Maturity, tact, and enthusiasm for the job also are important. Many firms offer formal training programs for real estate sales workers. All States and the District of Columbia require sales workers and brokers to pass a written examination and to be licensed.	Agents and brokers often work evenings and weekends to suit the convenience of customers.
Retail Trade Sales Workers	In addition to selling, these workers make out sales or charge slips, receive cash payments, and give change and receipts. They also handle returns and exchanges of merchandise and keep their work areas neat. Most work in retail stores ranging in size from small drug stores to huge department stores. They also work for door-to-door sales companies and for mail-order houses. Jobs are available in almost every community but most sales workers are employed in large cities and nearby suburban areas.	Employers prefer high school graduates. Some high schools have programs that teach the principles of retail selling. Most sales workers learn their skills on the job. In large stores, training programs for newly hired workers usually begin with several days of classroom instruction followed by on-the-job training under the supervision of an experienced worker.	Because Saturday is a busy day for stores, employees usually work that day and have a weekday off. Sales workers may work very long hours before Christmas and during other peak periods. There are many opportunities for part-time employment during peak periods.

Occupation	*Nature and Places of Work*	*Training and Qualifications*	*Other Information*
Travel Agents	Travel agents help their customers plan trips. They suggest itineraries and points of interest, make hotel reservations, arrange for transportation, and handle other details. In making arrangements, they consult fare schedules and fact sheets for hotel ratings and other tourist information. About one-half of all travel agencies are located in large cities, one-third are in suburban areas, and one-fifth are in small towns and rural areas.	Most agencies provide either formal or informal on-the-job training programs for their agents. Working part time or during summers as a reservation clerk or receptionist in a travel agency provides useful experience. Several home study courses also provide a basic understanding of the travel industry. Since the ability to speak of personal experiences frequently helps influence customers' travel plans, broad travel experience is an important qualification. Travel agents should have pleasant personalities and patience. Agents should be efficient and responsible. High school courses in geography, foreign languages, and history are helpful.	One travel agent in four is self-employed. However, agents going into business for themselves should be prepared for low earnings for the first few years they are in the business. Travel agents frequently travel at substantially reduced rates. Sometimes a hotel or resort will offer a travel agent a free holiday. Many agents, especially those who are self-employed, frequently work overtime.
Wholesale Trade Sales Workers	These workers sell for wholesale houses that distribute goods to retail stores and consumers. Many are employed by wholesalers or distributors who handle machinery, building materials, food products, drugs, drygoods, motor vehicle parts, or electrical appliances. Wholesale houses usually are located in big cities, but sales workers may be assigned territories in any part of the country.	High school graduation is the usual requirement although some sales jobs require college training. Courses such as commercial arithmetic and merchandising are helpful. Selling certain products requires more specialized training. Those who work for drug wholesalers, for example, would find courses in biology, chemistry, and pharmacy helpful. Workers usually begin as trainees and are trained in nonselling jobs before being assigned to sales. Trainee programs usually involve classroom instruction as well as rotations to nonselling jobs. Generally 2 years or longer are required before trainees are ready for their own territories.	Sales workers often have long, irregular work hours and frequently have to travel in their work. Most companies provide cars for their sales workers or reimburse them for their expenses while on the road.

Occupation	*Nature and Places of Work*	*Training and Qualifications*	*Other Information*
Route Drivers	These workers sell and deliver goods and services such as dairy products and drycleaning directly to customers. Most work for small companies that distribute food products or provide personal services, for example, dairies, bakeries, food and beverage distribution firms, and drycleaning plants. Jobs are available in small towns as well as in large cities.	Most States require that route drivers have a chauffeur's license. Most employers prefer applicants who are high school graduates and over 25 years of age. Courses in sales techniques, public speaking, driver training, and bookkeeping are helpful. Some large companies have classes in sales techniques, but training is mostly on the job.	Route drivers have to make deliveries in all kinds of weather and do considerable lifting, carrying, and walking. Many start work very early in the morning. For many route drivers, the fact that they do not work under close supervision is an attractive part of the job.
Securities Sales Workers	These workers buy and sell stocks and bonds for individuals. They also give market advice, and keep records on customer accounts. Securities sales workers are employed by brokerage firms, investment banks, and mutual funds in all parts of the country. Most, however, work for large firms with offices in big cities.	Employers prefer college graduates with degrees in business administration, economics, finance, or liberal arts. Successful sales or managerial experience helps because many employers look for specific personality traits and signs of sales ability. Most States require persons who sell securities to be licensed and registered. Examinations and character investigations are required for registration. Most employers provide training to help sales workers meet the requirements for registration.	Securities sales workers work fairly regular hours although they may meet with customers on evenings and weekends.

Answers to Related Occupations

SECURITIES SALES WORKER

1. Insurance agent and broker, 2. Real estate agent and broker, 3. Automobile sales worker, 4. Yacht broker, 5. Security analyst, 6. Order clerk, 7. Margin trader, 8. Bond trader.

AUTOMOBILE PARTS COUNTER WORKER

1. Manufacturer's representative, 2. Automobile sales worker, 3. Automobile service adviser, 4. Automobile mechanic, 5. Gasoline service station attendant.

GASOLINE SERVICE STATION ATTENDANT

1. Retail trade sales clerk, 2. Dining room attendant, 3. Dishwasher, 4. Animal caretaker, 5. Usher, 6. Fountain worker, 7. Library clerk, 8. Vehicle washer, 9. Health trainee, 10. Newspaper vendor, 11. Cashier, 12. Amusement attendant, 13. Messenger, 14. Stock handler.

Answer to math problem

SECURITIES SALES WORKER

AC&C, American Railroad Co., and D.C. Electric Co. would provide a higher yield than the savings account.

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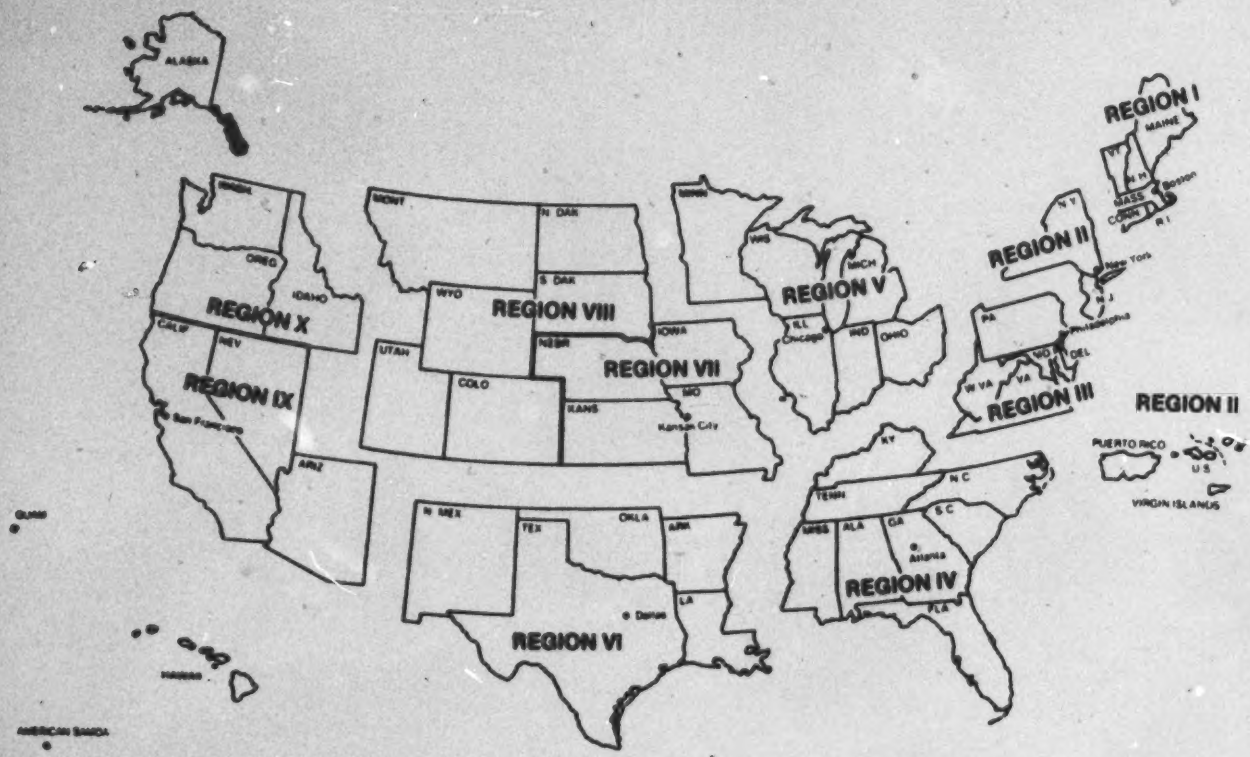

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